

ARTICLE APPEARED
ON PAGE A-14

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By PHILIP TAUBMAN

Special to The New York Times

WASHINGTON, April 26 — John N. McMahon, who was chosen today by President Reagan to succeed Adm. Bobby R. Inman as Deputy Director of Central Intelligence, probably knows more about the operations of the Central Intelligence Agency than anyone else in Government.

In a 31-year career there, Mr. McMahon has been a generalist among intelligence specialists, holding senior management posts in all major divisions of the agency, including stints as head of operations and chief of analysis.

That versatility, according to Congressional and intelligence officials, is likely to be both an asset and a liability for Mr. McMahon as he takes over the nation's second most important intelligence job. His nomination is subject to Senate confirmation.

It will be an asset, they said, because Mr. McMahon is equipped to supervise all facets of American intelligence collection and analysis and has the expertise to reassure Congress that intelligence operations are being managed well.

"Team Player and Inside Man"

As a result, the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence, which has had a strained relationship with William J. Casey, the Director of Central Intelligence, and has made no secret of its preference for dealing with Admiral Inman, is expected to move quickly to approve Mr. McMahon's appointment.

His versatility, however, could prove to be a liability, the officials said, because it has left him without the independent standing necessary to be an effective advocate within the Reagan Administration for policies he supports.

"John is a consummate team player and inside man," said a former intelligence official. "The price for that is that John lacks an outside constituency and the clout that goes with it."

He is known best in the intelligence community for his management skills.

"He's a very good manager, and people like working with him," said Richard Helms, a former director of the C.I.A.

Panel Sees Need for Experience

Mr. McMahon, whom a friend described as having a face that "has the map of Ireland written all over it," is reputed to have a finely tuned sense of humor that he often uses to leaven tedious intelligence briefings.

Former intelligence officials who have worked with him say he likes to immerse himself in details and work long hours, including most weekends.

Several members of the Senate intelligence committee, after Mr. Inman's resignation was announced last week, said they thought it was essential for the White House to select an experienced intelligence officer as his replacement because Mr. Casey's work in intelligence before his appointment last year was restricted to service in World War II.

C.I.A. Expert for Inman Post

John Norman McMahon

Little Is Known About His Positions

His policy and political positions are not well known. In the debate last year over the drafting of a Presidential executive order to govern the activities of intelligence agencies, he reportedly supported Admiral Inman's position that it would be a mistake to remove the restrictions on domestic intelligence gathering imposed by Presidents Ford and Carter.

Because he moved so quickly from job to job, Mr. McMahon did not have a chance to build a foundation of loyal support in any of the C.I.A.'s divisions, former intelligence officials said.

In addition, they said, he did not have a chance to develop a reputation outside the intelligence community. That could handicap him in policy debates, they said, because he is not well known in the White House.

Assigned to Work on U-2 Spy Plane

John Norman McMahon was born July 3, 1929, in East Norwalk, Conn. He began his career at the C.I.A. in 1951 after graduating from Holy Cross College in Massachusetts. After a tour of duty overseas — the C.I.A. will not disclose where — he returned to headquarters in 1959 and was assigned to work on the secret U-2 spy plane program.

In 1965 he became deputy director of the office of special projects, which supervised the U-2 program. In 1971 he was named director of the Office of Electronic Intelligence, and he moved on to head the technical services office, which handles the design and manufacture of specialized intelligence equipment.

Before becoming director of operations, he also helped run the administrative division of the C.I.A. and the office that handles liaison with other intelligence agencies.

In a profession in which specialized knowledge is highly valued, Mr. McMahon's wide-ranging career is considered almost unique. Associates said he survived and prospered through numerous changes of command partly because he was always loyal to his superiors.

He is married and has four children, ranging in age from 17 to 28.

ARTICLE APPEARED
ON PAGE 16

LOS ANGELES TIMES
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Fearing Public Trials, U.S. Officials to Block Prosecution of Spies, Bell W

By JIM MANN, *Times Staff Writer*

WASHINGTON—American intelligence and defense officials have repeatedly sought to block efforts by the Justice Department to prosecute spies in this country, according to former Atty. Gen. Griffin B. Bell.

In the draft of a book to be published later this year, Bell, who headed the Justice Department under President Jimmy Carter from 1977 to 1979, wrote that U.S. intelligence agencies "look on espionage prosecutions as potential mine fields for them, even though they are directed against the other side."

Bell wrote that U.S. intelligence agencies resisted espionage prosecutions because they feared public trials might require disclosure of national security information, and also because in some cases they feared retaliation against U.S. personnel overseas.

'Falsehoods' Cited in Case

In one case—the eventually successful prosecution of former low-level Central Intelligence Agency aide William P. Kampiles for selling a satellite manual to a Soviet official—Bell said Pentagon lawyers asked the Justice Department to tell of what he called "falsehoods" in court to avoid disclosing information about U.S. reconnaissance operations.

"The Pentagon approach showed no respect for the integrity of our criminal justice system," the former attorney general said.

In another matter, Bell wrote, then-CIA Director Stansfield Turner went to Chief Justice Warren E. Burger to ask that the CIA be allowed to approve and to give polygraph tests to the federal judges who would sit on a new Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Court. Bell said the chief justice denied this request, which he, as attorney general, had opposed.

When asked to comment on Bell's assertions, a CIA spokesman issued a statement that said, "The decision to prosecute rests with the attorney general, and the CIA is not part of that process." The agency declined further comment, and the Pentagon had no immediate response.

Bell's manuscript, which was written with Times reporter Ronald J. Ostrow, was cleared with the CIA and other intelligence agencies. They requested some deletions or changes in the two chapters on intelligence to protect the disclosure of what they regarded as sensitive national security information.

The CIA spokesman said its prior review of portions of Bell's book "in no way implies that these portions are accurate or are endorsed by the agency."

The book also contains a few less-than-flattering remarks about other members of the Carter Administration, including the President and vice-president.

Bell wrote that he had not been entirely joking when he told others that Carter was "about as good a President as an engineer can be." And Bell said Carter made "a crucial mistake" by letting Vice President Walter F. Mondale have an office in the White House, which Mondale used, he said, as a "power center" to promote views more liberal than Carter's.

'Sources and Methods'

In explaining why U.S. intelligence officials opposed prosecutions of some foreign spies, Bell said, "Intelligence officials—ever mindful of the need to protect at virtually all costs their 'sources and methods'—a phrase they use repeatedly and in near-reverent tones—warily regard an attorney general who declares he intends to prosecute spies."

Bell described four major espionage cases in which the Justice Department faced resistance from the CIA or other outside agencies.

In 1977, Bell said, the CIA tried to persuade its informant, a Vietnamese woman named Dung Krall, not to testify for the prosecution at the trial of David Truong and International Communications Agency aide Ronald L. Humphrey, both later convicted on espionage charges.

"CIA resistance came from the top," Bell wrote. At one point, he said, a CIA case officer went to London to try to persuade Krall not to take the witness stand. He told Atty. Turner that his officer was to have no more contact with Mrs. Krall.

In 1978, the State and the CIA "vigorously" prosecuted" of two Soviets in the United States, Chernyayev and Vladislav. Both were convicted and sentenced to 30 years but were later allowed to return to the United States.

"The State Department said that the prosecution was a deterrent, and the CIA said the Soviets would return Americans in the U.S.S.R." Bell wrote. "The President (said) that based on the quality of information he had been receiving, he was surprised we had anyone working inside the Soviet Union."

Also in 1978, Bell said, the Defense Department exerted "extreme pressure" to prevent prosecutors from discussing U.S. satellite reconnaissance at former CIA aide Kampiles' trial. Bell said the Justice Department was asked to present in court "theories" that the KH-11 satellite system had never been put into operation.

"One problem with any of the falsehoods was that Kampiles knew the Soviets had the manual in their hands, and that the KH-11 was an operational system," Bell said.

In 1980, Bell said, "interagency tensions" between the Justice Department and the CIA surfaced again during the prosecution of former CIA official David H. Barnett for giving information to Soviet KGB agents.

Bell's book also provided further details of the effort by some officials in the Carter Administration and media figures to persuade the Justice Department not to prosecute former CIA Director Richard Helms.

According to Bell, Energy Secretary James Schlesinger, national security adviser Zbigniew Brzezinski, CBS commentator Eric Sevareid and Ambassador W. Averell Harriman urged that Helms not be prosecuted. Helms later pleaded no-contest to a charge of failing to testify accurately in Congress.

STAT

ARTICLE APPEARED
ON PAGE 31

NEWSWEEK
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NATIONAL AFFAIRS



Herman J. Kokojian—Black Star

The Strategic Air Command's underground control room in Colorado: Testing the nation's response to a Soviet 'decapitation strike'

The Doomsday Exercise

As part of the continuing global chess game known as nuclear-war strategy, American planners convene once a year or so to fight what former CIA director William Colby once called "pencil-and-paper wars": simulated superpower showdowns that lead inexorably to the nightmare of nuclear exchange. This year, for five days at the beginning of March, war-gamers staged one of the most extensive simulations in more than two decades. It ended in a full frontal Soviet attack and the "death" of the President in the White House Situation Room—but with the country's ability to retaliate still intact. The exercise reassured President Reagan and his top advisers—and unintentionally undercut Administration claims of American vulnerability to the Soviet Union.

As reconstructed by the Wall Street Journal last week, the doomsday exercise was designed to test the government's ability to function in the event of a "decapitation strike"—a nuclear attack aimed at the central nervous system of military and civilian control. The scenario began with rising international tension during which both the United States and the Soviet Union mobilized for war. After Soviet attacks on American forces in Europe, South Korea and Southwest Asia, war was declared. Then came the sinking, by tactical nuclear weapons, of a U.S. ship in the North Atlantic and a chemical warfare attack on U.S. troops overseas. The President, played by former Secretary of State William P. Rogers, ordered a low-level nuclear counterattack—and the war rapidly escalated.

How to respond militarily to the Soviet attack was only one of the players' problems. The question of when to disperse officials in the line of

Presidential succession provoked a debate. So did civil-defense issues, such as how and when to detach military units to aid in evacuation of threatened civilian populations. A hypothetical Soviet destruction of American satellites required the war-gamers to coordinate the launching of new satellites to fill in the gaps.

Climax: The game's climactic moment came on the fourth day, when the scenario called for a 5,000-megaton missile attack on the American mainland and the death of the President—who had risked directing the war from Washington. Command then shifted to the Vice President, played by former CIA director Richard Helms, now a consultant in Washington. Two Cabinet members—Commerce Secretary Malcolm Baldrige and Interior Secretary James Watt, playing themselves—were sent to secret Federal facilities hundreds of miles from the capital. To the war-gamers' gratification, the President's successors were able to set in motion an all-out retaliatory strike even after absorbing the Soviet onslaught.

Rogers and Helms: Playing President and the Veep



Unlike previous war games, which were attended mainly by third- and fourth-echelon officials, this exercise involved many senior officials who would be called on in an actual nuclear confrontation. There were a few ceremonial figures—Rogers was signed up after Reagan's surprising first choice to play the President, Jimmy Carter's national-security adviser, Zbigniew Brzezinski, was vetoed by White House political operatives—but the top levels of the Administration were well represented. In addition to Baldrige and Watt, the players included Fred Ikle, Under Secretary of Defense, Walter Stoessel, Deputy Secretary of State and Gen. James E. Dalton of the Air Force, staff director for the Joint Chiefs of Staff. Among the observers were Vice President George Bush, Secretary of State Alexander Haig, Defense Secretary Caspar Weinberger, national-security adviser William P. Clark—and Ronald Reagan himself. The hope was that the quick tempo of decision-making would prepare these officials for the on-your-feet thinking they would have to do during a real Soviet attack.

The main reason U.S. officials were willing to discuss the exercise was their desire

"to make sure that the other side is aware that we have the capability" to coordinate a response. President Reagan is said to believe that the ability to maintain the continuity of government is as much a deterrent to attack as the ability to make sophisticated weapons. But the exercise also left at least one important question unanswered. The game ended only one day after the Soviet attack on the U.S. mainland, long enough to make sure the government would keep functioning—but not long enough to find out how the planet would fare.

PETER MCGRATH with DAVID C. MARTIN and ELEANOR CLIFT in Washington